

Iowa Fishing Report

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The Iowa Department of Natural Resources issues a weekly fishing report on Thursdays in an effort to provide the latest information heading into the weekend. The weekly fishing report is compiled from information gathered from local bait shops, angler creel surveys, and county and state parks staff. For current information, contact the district fisheries office at the phone number listed at the end of each district report.

Southwest

Hickory Grove (Story): Bluegill fishing has slowed a little. A few fish are still being found suspended around structure in 20 to 25 feet of water. Most of the bluegills being caught are in the 7 to 8-inch range.

Big Creek (Polk): Bluegill fishing is fair during the day in 15 feet of water or less. Most bluegills caught are 7 to 9 inches. Crappie fishing is still good. The crappie bite is best in the evenings after around 7 p.m. Electronics are a big help as the crappies are suspended 5 to 10 feet off the bottom in 30 plus feet of water. Setting a lantern or other light source on the ice while fishing seems to help attract and hold the fish. Chartreuse or glowing jigs tipped with wax worms or spikes have been the best producers.

Easter Lake (Polk): Anglers have been catching crappies using wax worms or dead sticking minnows hooked through the back. Most of the fish are in the 8 inch range.

Rock Creek (Jasper): Crappies are being caught. Most fish are 9 inches or less, but some are up to 11 inches.

Ada Hayden (Story): A few decent crappies are being caught. There has also been some good catfish coming through the ice. The reports are coming from the south pit.

Contact Ben Dodd at (515) 432-2823, Ext.108, for information on the above area lakes

Ice fishing at farm ponds and small lakes is still very good. Reports are indicating catching more fish suspended than a few weeks ago. Ice has been 14 inches thick. Large lakes are also frozen over but ice thickness and condition varies.

Three Mile Lake (Union): Ice thickness can be from 6 to 16 inches. The roadway between the ramps and the cove just south of the upper ramp is a popular spot. Some anglers are fishing the trees in the cove south of the pump station or the south side of the pump house point. Early morning and late day fishing seems to be more successful. Anglers are catching mostly bluegills on wax worms with a few crappies or perch on minnows.

Twelve Mile Lake (Union): The lake is completely frozen. It is the most consistent at producing excellent bluegills. The best spots seem to be in the creek channel or over the roadway between the two middle ramps or south along the west bank. Several walleyes, a lot of 7 to 8-inch bluegills, and a few 12-inch crappies have been caught. Ice thickness seems to be over 6 inches in most places with some areas up to 16

inches thick. Vehicles have been seen on the lake but ice thickness can vary greatly and driving on the ice is not encouraged.

Lake Icaria (Adams): The lake is completely frozen except for a small area east of the main ramp. The angling activity has occurred in the south corner of the dam. Some 8-inch bluegills and some 9-inch crappies are being caught from the deeper areas.

Lake of Three Fires (Taylor): The angling activity has occurred over the brush pile immediately north of the center of the dam. A lot of nice bluegills up to 9 inches and few crappies up to 12 inches have been caught on wax worms.

Fogle Lake (Ringgold): Angling activity has occurred over the brush pile just north of the center of the dam and the brush piles to the northwest of the spillway. The bluegills are 6 to 7.5 inches and the crappies are 8 to 10.5 inches. The ice is 10 to 14 inches thick.

Walnut Creek Marsh (Ringgold): Some really nice crappies and mid-sized bluegills have been caught in 4 to 6 feet of water along the south dike.

Contact Gary Sobotka at (641) 464-3108 for information on the above area lakes.

Lake Manawa (Pottawattamie): Anglers are catching crappies ranging in size from 9 to 12 inches early in the morning and an hour before dark. Channel catfish is fair using dead minnows around the beach area.

Anderson Area (Montgomery): Bluegills are fair using wax worms. A few 8-inch crappies are being caught in the evenings using minnows.

Lake Anita (Cass): Fishing is fair for 7 to 8-inch bluegills. Crappies measuring 9 inches can be caught late in the day and after dark on minnows. Fish can be found around the submerged habitat in 18 to 20 feet of water.

Desoto Bend (Harrison): Crappie fishing has been slow on the refuge.

Nodaway Lake (Adair): Fishing has slowed for 7-inch bluegills but a few are still being caught in the late afternoon.

Nodaway Pond (Cass): Fishing is slow for bluegills on ice jigs tipped with wax worms.

Greenfield Reservoir (Adair): Fishing is slow for 8-inch bluegills. The best fishing is late in the afternoon until dark.

Southwest Iowa Farm Ponds: The best fishing reports have been from privately owned small ponds for bluegill and in the larger ponds, crappie, using teardrops tipped with wax worm. Ice thickness is 8 to 10 inches.

Contact Bryan Hayes at (712) 769-2587 for information on the above area lakes.

For more information on general fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

Northwest

Spirit Lake (Dickinson): Bluegills are being caught in Angler's Bay along the weed beds and open areas with small ice jigs tipped with wax worms. Yellow perch are biting along the rock reefs at Buffalo Run or the footbridge in the mornings using jigging lures tipped with minnows or a slip bobber rig baited with a minnow. Walleyes are biting along the weed lines and rock reefs on jigging lures tipped with a minnow at sunrise and

sunset at the footbridge and between Cottonwood and Big Stoney points. For northern pike, fish along rock reefs at Buffalo Run or Cottonwood and Big Stoney points with jigging lures tipped with live bait.

West Okoboji Lake (Dickinson): Bluegills are biting in Emerson, Miller's, and North bays on small ice jigs tipped with wigglers or wax worms. Walleyes are being caught from the rock reefs in North, Miller's and Emerson bays with jigging lures tipped with minnows in the morning or evening. Northern pike are biting on live bait or jigging lures tipped with live bait in Emerson, North, and Miller's Bay.

East Okoboji Lake (Dickinson): Use jigging lures tipped with minnows at rock bars in the morning and evening for walleyes.

Five Island Lake (Palo Alto): Use jigging lures tipped with live-bait or a slip bobber and minnow in the evening for active walleyes.

Virgin Lake (Palo Alto): Yellow perch are biting on jigging lures tipped with live bait in the morning.

Storm Lake (Buena Vista): Fishing is fair to good for walleyes on live minnows or a jigging spoon with a minnow head. Don't forget that there is a 17 to 22-inch slot limit on walleye in Storm Lake. All fish in that range must be returned to the water immediately.

Crawford Creek Lake (Ida): Fishing is fair to good for bluegills and a few crappies.

Bacon Creek Lake (Woodbury): 2,000 catchable sized rainbow trout were stocked on Jan. 29. Anglers are required to purchase a trout fee, in addition to a 2009 fishing license, to fish for trout in Iowa. There is a five fish daily bag limit and a 10 fish possession limit for trout.

Brushy Creek Lake (Webster): Lake ice is in good shape. Warmer weather this week will cause the lake to have many places of water under the snow. A few nice walleyes have been caught fishing with minnows at sunset. Crappies and bluegills are close to the bottom.

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo): Ice on Clear Lake averages 25 to 28 inches. Yellow bass are continuing to bite on the west end of the main lake. The best bite is at sunrise and sunset. Fish are being caught in 8 to 10 feet of water using either a jig tipped with minnow or wax worm or a jigging spoon.

Blue Pit (Cerro Gordo): Trout fishing has been fair.

Eldred Sherwood Park, Indian Lake (Hancock): Ice on Indian Lake averages 18 to 22 inches. Bluegill fishing has been fair using small jigs tipped with a wax worms.

Silver Lake (Worth): Yellow perch fishing has slowed. Fishing the north side of the lake by the county park has been one of the better spots. Try using a jig tipped with a minnow for best results.

For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.

Northeast

Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15: Pool 9 anglers are catching a few northern pike on tip-ups in Fish Lake, off Army Road in New Albin. Like most places, fishing has been hot and cold with a lot of sorting. Some panfish can be caught in the warm water releases at the Lansing Power Plant. Shore Slough near Lansing has been producing a

few bluegills, but fish may move south into deeper water as much of the upper portions of the slough are frozen to the bottom.

Pool 10 saugers can be caught below the dam at Lynxville using a jig and minnow. A few walleye can also be caught here on jigs with twister tails. Use the smallest jig that you can get to the bottom for best success. The best angling seems to be near first light in morning. For ice fishing, angling has slowed near the spillway, but some northern pike and bass can be caught using shiners on tip-ups. The sorting of panfish is going on at the spillway as well. Some crappies are being caught at Spring Lake and Mud Slough north of Prairie du Chien. The Sny Magill Access is producing bluegills, but many are small and some sorting will be necessary. These areas include Sandbar, Norwegian and Methodist lakes. A few nice crappies have also been caught in Norwegian Lake and some nice crappie still being reported out of Ice Lake. Bussey Lake has been hit or miss for bluegill all winter. There are fish to be caught, but you may need to move around until you find them. Many anglers are now driving vehicles on Bussey Lake.

Pool 11 saugers are being caught below the dam at Guttenberg using a jig and minnow. Anglers can only effectively reach the tailwaters with the use of an airboat. Some walkout angling is occurring, but that should be done with caution. For ice fishing, some angling is taking place on Burtom Lake south of Cassville, but sorting of bluegills is required. In both new project areas in lower Pool 11 (Mud Lake and Sunfish Lake), yellow perch and pumpkinseeds are being caught, but they require much patience. Many are driving vehicles out to the fishing sites. Anglers with electronics report seeing schools of perch, but they seem to be quite finicky. The best fishing seems to be later in the afternoon. Some fishing is also being conducted in Finley's Landing boat ramp harbor area where a few crappies are being reported.

Fishing in **Pools 12 to 15** is fair to poor. Sorting is necessary in order to get a few keeper-sized fish. The best fishing can be found in O'Leary's Lake, Kehough Slough and Frentress Lake (**Pool 12**), South Sabula Lake, Spring Lake and Mickelson's Lake (**Pool 13**), and Rock Creek (**Pool 14**).

Avenue of the Saints, Plainfield Lake and Sweets Marsh (Bremer): Fishing has been good for bluegills and crappies in these area lakes.

Casey Lake (Tama): Bluegill fishing is fair to good around stake beds and brush piles located in 10 feet of water or deeper near the center and on the east side of the lake. Jigs tipped with a wax worm works well for bluegills.

George Wyth and South Prairie lakes (Black Hawk): Anglers have been catching bluegills on wax worms. Fishing has been fair on South Prairie Lake; however, this lake can produce larger bluegills.

Lake Delhi (Delaware): Bluegills and crappies are biting next to structure in 20 to 25 feet of water. Try fishing the lower end of the lake for best success.

Lake Hendricks (Howard): Anglers continue to work to catch fish, but it is slow going. Fish are being caught using a jig tipped with a wax worm. There is about 20 inches of ice and snow—depths can vary but be especially cautious around the aerator. Try fishing at various depths as fish are likely suspended off the bottom at this time of year.

Lake Meyer (Winneshek): Fishing has slowed since last week; however, they are nice sized fish when they bite. Anglers have been using white and pink jigs tipped

with a wax worm. The best time to fish seems to be around sunup still with a very small bite window.

Volga Lake (Fayette): Anglers reported a slow down, but this should be changing soon as some of the snow melts off the ice. Try fishing a different spot if a fish does not bite right away. Also try suspending lures in 3 to 6 feet of water this time of year.

Northeast Iowa Trout Streams: Trout fishing is good and anglers in the Decorah area are reporting catching nice trout on the streams. Better trout streams with good spring flows will be open throughout the winter and all streams should open up with the upcoming warm weather. Trout fishing is a great option for the ice-shy angler and the snow covered scenery is beautiful. Recent stockings on urban lakes include: **North Prairie in Cedar Falls** (January 17), **Heritage Pond in Dubuque** (January 21), Blue Pit in Mason City (January 22), Bacon Creek Lake in Sioux City (January 29). Be sure to get your 2009 fishing license and trout fishing fee.

For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.

Southeast

Mississippi River Pools 16 to 20: In **Pool 16**, tailwater stage at Lock and Dam 15 is 4.82 feet. The Marquette St. ramp in Davenport is open. A few anglers have been walleye and sauger fishing in the tailwaters but fishing has been slow. Anglers are using jigs and large minnows. Ice fishing in Sunset Marina has been slow for bluegills and crappies. In **Pool 17**, tailwater stage at Lock and Dam 16 is 3.95 feet. The ramp is still frozen in at Muscatine. Ice fishing has slowed down in Big Timber and Hidden Acres but a few bluegills and crappies are being caught.

In **Pool 18**, tailwater stage at Lock and Dam 17 is 5.71 feet. The Toolesboro ramp is still frozen in. Most area ice fishing reports are coming from farm ponds and lakes. In **Pool 19**, tailwater stage at Lock and Dam 18 is 2.58 feet. The ramps are still frozen in. Area ice fishing reports are coming from farm ponds and lakes. In **Pool 20**, tailwater stage at Lock and Dam 19 is 2.97 feet. Water levels are fluctuating daily due to dam releases. Area ice fishing reports are coming from farm ponds and lakes.

Lake Darling (Washington): The lake is completely drained.

Lake Belva Deer (Keokuk): Anglers are catching bluegills and crappies in 16 to 18 feet of water in the trees around the south boat ramp

Lake Geode (Henry): Fishing is fair to good for bluegills. If the predicted warm weather arrives, be careful as there may be declining ice conditions especially near the upper end where the stream flow enters the lake.

Lake Rathbun (Appanoose): Crappie fishing has been slow with some larger crappies being caught using minnows. Some anglers are also vertically jigging around brush piles or drop-offs.

Lake Sugema (Van Buren): Anglers have been catching crappies and bluegills using small jigs tipped with a wax worm or minnow. The Tug Forks lakes have also been producing some nice catches of bluegills and crappies using the same techniques.

Lake Keomah (Mahaska): Anglers have been catching bluegills and crappies using small jigs with a wax worm or minnow. Try areas with downed trees or off the ends of rock jetties.

Lake Wapello (Davis): The lake has been completely drained.

Lake Miami (Monroe): Anglers have been catching some crappies and bluegills using small jigs tipped with a wax worm or minnow. For the best success, fish areas with structure.

Lake Macbride (Johnson): Fishing has slowed down but some crappies are still being caught, as well as plenty of small bluegills. Fish around deeper brush, structure, or drop-offs into the main lake basin.

Kent Park (Johnson): Anglers are having some success on bluegills fishing around deeper structure with small jigs and wax worms. Dusk seems to be the prime fishing time.

Lake Iowa (Iowa): Fishing around deeper brush or stake beds has been producing bluegills and redears. There are many smaller fish, but fish up to 9 inches are mixed in. Some channel catfish are also being caught. An ice jig and wax worm has been working best.

Union Grove (Tama): Bluegills and crappies are being caught in high numbers but small to average in size. Look for them in 8 to 10 feet of water around brush. The aeration system was turned on December 30, so there are now open water pockets at the dam end of the lake.

Hannen Lake (Benton): Some bluegills are being caught on jigs and wax worms on the north half of the lake. Best catches have actually been away from structure as the fish seem to be roaming in schools. The bite seems to be best towards dusk.

Iowa River (Johnson): A few walleyes are being picked up below the dams and in deeper holes. These over wintering areas are producing fish on jigs and minnows or twisters.

County Conservation Board ponds: (Washington and Keokuk): These smaller public bodies of water have been producing some nice catches of fish all winter. Ice thickness, lately, has been about 9 to 11 inches. The thermocline in most of these ponds is in the 8 to 10 foot range so concentrate your efforts at those depths.

For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.

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